

THE ST. LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

January - February 1941

-0-

"DOUBLE FEATURE" MEETING FEBRUARY 20TH

The St. Louis Bird Club is presenting a new wrinkle in bird lectures February 20th, 8 P.M., at the Adult Study Center, Lake and Waterman. Two outstanding ornithologists of the country will be with us. Dr. George Miksch Sutton, the famous bird artist of Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, will speak briefly and he will be followed by Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., of Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, who will do the bulk of the lecturing. Dr. Pettingill, who comes to us highly recommended by Allan Cruickshank, our October hit speaker, will present an all-color motion picture lecture on "Birds that Haunt the Waterways". Birds that live by the waterways from Maine, Michigan and Minnesota to Louisiana and Florida will be vividly described, including the following species: Spotted Sandpiper, Killdeer, Franklin's Gull, Forster's Tern, Yellowheaded Blackbird, Herring Gull, American Coot, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Pied-billed Grebe, Brown Pelican, Lesser Scaup Duck, American Bittern, American Merganser, Ring-billed and Laughing Gulls, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron and Caspian Tern.

You'll see thousands of Snowy Egrets in Avery Island, Louisiana; you may watch the Killdeer feign injury when approached; see how the Bittern "freezes" when danger is near; peep into the floating nests of Grebes and Terns, and forget your cares in an evening of recreation on inland lakes, canoe-paddling down quiet rivers, hunting and exploring out-of-the-way bayous and marshes, and visiting the very sea itself. Whatever you do, don't miss this meeting! And mail the enclosed descriptive card to one of your friends.

LECTURES IN RETROSPECT

-0-

That we've got a flying start on our lecture season is conceded by everyone who has had the pleasure of attending one or all lectures so far this season. October 3rd brought Allan Cruickshank of the National Audubon Society, New York City, whose bird imitations had his audience "Oh-ing" and Ah-ing. Then on December 9th, Dr. Miles D. Pirnie from the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Battle Creek, Michigan, gave a fine color picture lecture. January 6th brought a standing-room-only crowd of some 800 people who marvelled at the color pictures Cleveland P. Grant and his wife presented. January 13th featured Richard Fough, former President of the Club, and now with the National Audubon Society, who spoke on the feather trade. Four top-notch lectures. And there are more to come!

DUES

If a dues statement is attached to this bulletin, your 1941 membership still due. If there is no accompanying statement you are to assume that your dues are paid. General Membership dues of \$1.00 were due January 1st, except

those who enrolled during the last three months of 1940, thereby receiving a special paid-up membership through 1941.

If you are in arrears, won't you please attend to the matter immediately? Address your letter to the Secretary or Treasurer (Their addresses are to be found in this issue under article titled "Officers"). Make checks payable to "The St. Louis Bird Club".

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Possibly some of our members would like to change their memberships this year from General to Sustaining. The sustaining membership is designed for those who wish to help a bit more in the operating expenses of our organization. Sustaining memberships are \$5.00 per year. We are happy to announce the following 1941 Sustaining members:

Mrs. Joseph Vollmar, 6138 Simpson Ave.
Eunice C. Smith, Elm Ridge, Alton, Illinois
Reed B. Harkness, 4465 Forest Park Blvd.

MEMBERSHIP

Early in December a letter from your president requested doubling of our membership in order to carry on the work of the Club during 1941. We're happy to state that through Yecman work by the membership committee and many, many members of the Club, the membership has been doubled. At the end of January there were approximately 285 members on the Club roster. However, the president admits himself in error. His letter should have read "triple" instead of "double". Lectures of the calibre presented so far and operation have cost much more than anticipated. Certainly your Board of Directors is happy we had the lectures and in turn hopes that every member, new and old, has been pleased enough also to bend every effort toward bringing in one more new member each, thereby insuring a really bang-up Bird Club year. Member, will you help?

ENROLL IN BIRD COURSE

An innovation in bird study in St. Louis is Wayne Short's course in Popular Ornithology at the Adult Study Center. The second semester has already started but it's not too late for you to enroll. The course runs approximately eleven more weeks and that means weekly lectures each Monday from 7:30 to 8:30 and one field trip per week. Mounted specimens of the birds you see on field trips, both sound and silent motion pictures, slides, recordings of bird calls, and discussions of practically every phase of bird study feature the lectures. Field trips are conducted at Creve Coeur Lake, Horseshoe Lake, St. Charles County and in Forest Park. There is adequate transportation for those not having cars. With spring approaching and with the aid of our "eagle-eye" president, you should be able to identify 100 species of birds by the end of the course. Call the Adult Study Center, Ro-3701 for further information.

BIRDS OF THE YEAR

As is our custom the January issue presents "Birds of the year", a resume of the best bird observations of the year just passed. Although some will disagree with the ranking, much study has been made to list the observations in order of their

"bestness". The list is limited to the St. Louis area which covers chiefly St. Charles and St. Louis Counties in Missouri and St. Clair County in Illinois, but roughly extends a radius of 50 miles from St. Louis. (Pere Marquette Park records were not available and possibly a few other unknown observations missed competing.)

Here, then, are 1940's best birds:

1. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER. Widmann gives no St. Louis records; last recorded Mo., date 1907; but also seen at Kansas City in 1940. Observers: Short, May 28th and 31st Harry and Earl Comfort, June 16, 1940. Place: Peruque, St. Charles County.
2. BOHEMIAN WAXWING. Seen last in this area by Widmann and others some time in the twenties, if memory serves correctly. Observers: The Hills, March 24th. Place: Calhoun County, Illinois.
3. YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD. First record here in many, many years. Observers: Lois Karr and Margaret Dyer. Place: Orchard Farm, St. Charles County.
4. NORTHERN PHALAROPE. In 1939 the first Northern Phalarope recorded in St. Louis for 60 years was seen at Greve Coeur Lake by Dr. Zempel. That was Sept. 21st. This year on Oct. 3rd and 5th, Dr. Zempel, found a Northern Phalarope at the identical spot! Observers: Zempel, Short. Later, Ernst, Holzmark, Beckmann, and others.
5. ARKANSAS KINGBIRD. First recorded Eastern Missouri date by Short, May 29, 1938, Orchard Farm, St. Charles County. In 1940 reported by the Comforts on May 30th near Black Walnut, St. Charles County. Also seen by the Comforts and R. Hill, September 18th at Dupo, Illinois.
6. CINNAMON TEAL. Casual in Missouri, the Cinnamon Teal was observed by many club members near Orchard Farm, St. Charles County, on March 29th, 1939 and other dates near that date for approximately one week. In 1940 just a mile from 1939 site on April 1st, the Cinnamon Teal was found again. But this time there were two! Observers: Holzmark, April 1st and 6th; later, Ernst, Short, Beckmann, the Comforts, and others.
7. BONAPARTE'S GULL. Observer: L. R. Ernst, May 25th. Place: Alton Dam. Observers: Earl and James Comfort, Nov. 17th. Place: Horseshoe Lake, Illinois.
8. HARRIS'S SPARROW. The Comforts, Jan. 28th and Feb. 11th, had this unusual visitor (as far as St. Louis is concerned) at Glendale. Other Observers: Webster Bird Group and Wayne Short.
9. WHITE PELICAN. First specimen seen by a club member since the fall of 1936. Observers: Earl and James Comfort, Nov. 17th; Short, Ernst, Grossenheider, Holzmark, Nov. 18th.
10. SAW-WHET OWL. Observers: Ben Blewett school members, including De Vilbiss, Ernst, and also Harry Comfort. Place: Ben Blewett School campus. Date: March 7th.
11. YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON. Observers: Earl Comfort, Apr. 18th, and Earl and Harry Comfort, April 26th.
12. WILSON'S PHALAROPE. Observers: The Zempels. Place: Forest Park. Date: May 18th.

Note: An exceptional find, which is slightly out of the St. Louis area, was the Comfort's Swainson's Warbler at Steeleville, May 12th. Also: The best bird of the year for the St. Louis area was not seen by a St. Louis Bird Club member. It was shot illegally by a duck hunter at Peruque, St. Charles County, in December an Avocet, the first known here in perhaps a half century. The hunter was convicted and fined.

OBSERVER OF THE YEAR

We take pleasure in announcing a new winner for 1940. Top observing honors for the year go to our good friend and patient bird-watcher—Earl Comfort!

If you remember, 1938 honors for most Missouri birds observed by a Bird Club member were divided between Wayne Short and L. R. Ernst, the latter drawing aside i

a strong finish just at the end of the season, December 30th, in fact, for a tie -- 216 species each. But in 1939, Miss Ernst, away to a fast start, was never headed and finished at 231 to 228 for Short. But in 1940 it saw Earl Comfort by a nose. 7 entries were as closely bunched as heron nests in a rookery with the winner finishing at 214. Wayne Short placing with 213; Harry Comfort in the show position with 212; and Miss Ernst in fourth place with 211.

These figures are indicative, just as are the "Birds of the Year" following. Fewer species passed our way this season; and fewer spectacular finds occurred. Of the last three years 1940 was the poorest.

HELP WANTED

Help Wanted -- If you are young, middle aged, elderly; male, female; grade, high school, or college graduate; and in the market for a fairly easy job; you will qualify as assistant to the membership committee, welcome addition to the letter addresser's and stampicker's clique, Bulletin columnist, or any one of a dozen other incidental jobs that make this Bird Club business a real vocation. Salary : one million thank yous per month, payable bi-weekly. Apply Susan Grumann, 7330 Dorset, De 3007.

OFFICERS

At the recent annual meeting the following officers were given a vote of confidence and re-elected for the year 1941:

President -----Wayne Short, 1207 N. 7th CE 0631
Vice- President---Henry M. Kennon, Curator of the Bird House St. Louis Zoo
Secretary-----Mrs. H. R. Grumann, 7330 Dorset University City, DE 3007
Treasurer-----Nelle Lee Jenkinson, 4497 Pershing FR 5511
Editor-----Marvin Beckmann, 3665 Roswell Ave.

WELCOME

A hearty welcome to our many new members! May you find the Bird Club as great a pleasure as we who have enjoyed membership in it for some time.

OBSERVER OF THE YEAR

We take pleasure in announcing a new winner for 1940. Top observer honors were given to our good friend and faithful bird watcher, Harry Comfort! If you remember, 1939 honors for most successful bird observer were divided between Wayne Short and E. M. Ernst, the latter placing aside